

## Anna Hibiscus' Song by Atinuke, illustrated by Lauren Tobia (Walker Books)

Anna Hibiscus is a small girl of dual heritage with a happy heart living with a large and loving family in Africa. She asks each member of her extended family what she should do because she feels so happy and she weaves their various responses into a song. The location of the mango tree from which Anna surveys her world is non-specific but the endpapers of the book depict an urban environment by day and night, a contrast to picture books which frequently depict only the rural landscapes of Africa.

### Overall learning aims of this teaching sequence.

- To engage children with a story with which they will empathise;
- To encourage collaborative narrative play;
- To explore, develop and sustain ideas through talk;
- To enjoy listening to and using spoken and written language in play and learning;
- To use language to imagine and recreate roles and experiences;
- To explore the story through play, role-play and storytelling;
- To write for meaning and purpose in a variety of narrative and non-narrative forms.

This teaching sequence is designed for a Nursery or Reception class.

Overview of this teaching sequence	
<p>This teaching sequence is approximately 2-3 weeks long if spread out over a series of sessions. The book supports teachers to teach about emotional response to narrative fiction. The narrative structure set in a familiar family and home setting and the characters and settings are well drawn, offering young readers a good model for their own role play, experimentation and to structure writing to record and enhance their play.</p>	
Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework 2012:	
<p><b>Prime Area: Communication and Language</b></p> <p><b>Listening and attention:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Listen attentively in a range of situations;</li> <li>▪ Listen to stories, accurately anticipating key events and respond to what they hear with relevant comments, questions or actions;</li> <li>▪ Give their attention to what others say and respond appropriately, while engaged in another activity.</li> </ul> <p><b>Understanding:</b></p>	<p><b>Specific Area: Literacy</b></p> <p><b>Reading:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Read and understand simple sentences;</li> <li>▪ Use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately;</li> <li>▪ Read some common irregular words;</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.</li> </ul> <p><b>Writing:</b></p>

- Follow instructions involving several ideas or actions;
- Answer 'how' and 'why' questions about their experiences and in response to stories or events;

**Speaking:**

- Express themselves effectively, showing awareness of
- listeners' needs;
- Use past, present and future forms accurately when
- talking about events that have happened or are to happen in the future;
- Develop their own narratives and explanations by connecting ideas or events.

- Use phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds;
- Write some irregular common words.
- Write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others.
- Spell some words correctly and make phonetically plausible attempts at others.

**Cross Curricular Links:**

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**

- This book is perfect for exploring how to create and develop a sense of self with children in the Early Years. Create time for talk and activities that allow children to develop self-confidence in talking about themselves, their likes, families, things of immediate interest to them and significant personal memories and experiences.
- The book is also a wonderful vehicle for talking about and sharing how to express, recognise and manage emotions, both our own and recognising and responding to the emotional needs of others, share experiences through this text and reading related texts focussing on emotions so that children have the safety of using a story experience to talk about and explore their own feelings. Support children in enriching and increasing their stock of words to express their feelings, needs and opinions and develop their sense of self and awareness of the needs of others.

**Understanding the World:**

- Use the text as a stimulus to look at different houses and homes. Explore the different kinds of buildings in the local environment such as flats, houses and bungalows and the features of each of these homes.
- Talk about homes that have a garden to play in, like Anna does and homes that don't. Explore local areas like parks and communal gardens where children can exercise and play and why these are important spaces.
- Explore Anna's home continent of Africa. Find Africa on a map or globe. Identify some of the countries within the continent, linking to children's knowledge and personal experience. Read and explore Atinuke's book *Africa, Amazing Africa: Country by Country* by Atinuke, illustrated by Mouni Feddag (Walker) and watch videos that show the range of environments and

landscapes of different countries in Africa e.g.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=826tpNNrCFO> or

<http://www.bbcmotiongallery.com/gallery/home/showreelsbbc.do#showreel=15065895> and compare these countries with where the children live.

- You could focus on African animals, comparing and contrasting these with animals in the children's local area, and look at how these animals move, live, grow and change, comparing and contrasting this with our own experiences as humans.

### **Expressive Arts and Design:**

- Allow children opportunities to develop their sense of self by painting and drawing depictions of themselves and their lives, including their friends and family.
- Children could also explore the rich tradition of African print and pattern making, including Ndebele art and Batik.
- You could also explore and investigate the rich tradition of music in Africa, exploring Instruments such as djembe drums, thumb pianos etc. and listening to prominent African musicians, such as Amadou & Mariam, Baaba Maal, Bassekou Kouyate, Bolokaka Conde, Dobet Gnahore and Miriam Makeba.
- Dance and move to African music. Watch African dance and copy and innovate own movements.

### **Physical Development:**

- Investigate different ways of moving and travelling, inspired by the cousins in the story.
- Provide small and large scale equipment to support children in moving in different ways using their bodies. Also be aware that some of these activities might be things that could make some people nervous, rather than happy. Talk about how we can support our friends who might be worried even if we are not.
- Dance and move to African music, like Anna does with Uncle Tunde. Watch African dancers and copy and innovate own movements.

### **Mathematics:**

- Use hands to explore counting in 5s and 10s.
- Look at odd and even numbers by making a street of houses with odd on one side and even on the other.
- Use home role play area to match patterned socks and count these in twos when pairs are made.
- Use questions and tally charts to capture personal data, such as hair colour, eye colour, shoe size and use bar charts to record findings.

## **Ideas for Continuous Provision**

### **Reading area:**

- Create a display of books with familiar settings and focussed around families and that reflect the backgrounds of children in the setting, such as *So Much or Full*, *Full of Love* by Trish Cooke, *Titch* by Pat Hutchins, *Avocado Baby* by John Burningham, *Eat Up* Gemma by Sarah Hayes, *This is Lulu* by Camilla Reid etc.
- Make a display in the book area of parents/carers sharing favourite books with their children.

- Create a display of children's self portraits sharing their favourite texts by photocopying the book covers.
- Collect dual language picture books that reflect the languages spoken by families in the setting.

### Mark making/ writing

- Provide ample resources for the children to be able to draw and write about themselves, their families and their experiences. This should include a range of writing implements of different sizes and types as well as things to write on like a variety of paper, card, notepaper, message pads.
- Adults will need to model how writing can be used to explore and communicate feelings and experiences throughout the setting, displaying examples of their own writing and allowing space for children to share and display writing they have produced.
- Children may want to set up a message centre to write and deliver cards / notes / messages for people they love or friends in the setting.

### Small world play:

- Provide opportunities for children to revisit and talk together to explore this story for themselves in as many ways as possible:
  - **Storyprops:** create stick puppets of all the characters and create a tabletop theatre from a cardboard box
  - **Storybox:** Create a storybox of the setting with the children. Fill it with a variety of small people, buildings and cars to represent the characters and setting in the story.
  - Build a large scale model of the setting, with children junk-modelling the buildings and add dolls house people, natural materials etc.
- You could also create:
  - An African savannah scene in a tuff-spot with characters and leaves, twigs and other natural materials to depict the jungle setting.
  - In the outdoor area, place African animals in the sand, mud. Use water to make watering holes.

### Music Area:

- Create a music area, using African inspired instruments if they are available.
- Allow children to listen to and explore a rich range of African music, see suggestions above.
- Arrange an African drumming or dance workshop for the children to take part in.

### Role Play:

#### Classroom role-play:

- Work with the children to remodel the classroom role-play area as a travel agent. Enlist the children's help in writing signs for the shop, make price lists, posters, travel brochures, tickets, passports and postcards about trips to countries within the continent of Africa, like Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda - sometimes writing as teacher-in-role alongside the children as part of the play.

- Prior to this, take children to visit a real travel agent to see what happens there and collect further resources for the area.

#### Teaching Approaches:

- Reading aloud and rereading
- Role Play and Drama
- Re-enacting
- Visualising
- Poetry

#### Writing Outcomes:

- Shared Journal
- Poetry
- Speech/Thought Bubbles
- Caption Writing
- Recipe Writing
- Card Writing
- Own and Class made books

#### Links to other texts and resources:

Other books that explore everyday family life:

So Much, Trish Cooke, Illustrated by Helen Oxenbury (Walker)

My Two Grannies, Floella Benjamin, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain (Frances Lincoln)

Where's Lenny? Ken Wilson-Max (Alanna Max)

Lenny and Wilbur, Ken Wilson-Max (Alanna Max)

Astro Girl, Ken Wilson-Max (Otter-Barry Books) **CLPE Teaching sequence available**

Lulu Loves the Library, Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Alanna Max)

Lulu Loves Flowers, Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Alanna Max)

Lulu Gets a Cat, Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Alanna Max) **CLPE Teaching sequence available**

Lulu Reads to Zeki, Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Alanna Max)

Lulu's First Day, Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Alanna Max)

Zeki Can Swim!, Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Alanna Max)

Zeki Gets a Check Up, Anna McQuinn, illustrated by Rosalind Beardshaw (Alanna Max)

Knuffle Bunny, Mo Willems (Walker) **CLPE Teaching sequence available**

The Great Big Book of Families, Mary Hoffman, illustrated by Ros Asquith (Frances Lincoln)

#### Books that explore emotions:

*Ruby's Worry*, Tom Percival (Bloomsbury) **CLPE Teaching sequence available**

*Sweep*, Louise Greig and Júlia Sardà (Egmont)

*Silly Billy*, Anthony Browne (Walker)

*Owl Babies*, Martin Waddell and Patrick Benson (Walker) **CLPE Teaching sequence available**

*Dogger*, Shirley Hughes (Red Fox)

*A Book of Feelings*, Amanda McCardie and Salvatore Rubbino (Walker)

*Happy*, Mies Van Hout (Leminscaat)

*Feelings: Inside my heart and in my head*, Libby Walden and Richard Jones (Caterpillar Books)

*Lost and Found*, Oliver Jeffers (HarperCollins)

*The Girl With a Parrot on her Head*, Daisy Hirst (Walker)

*Little Mouse's Big Book of Fears*, Emily Gravett (Macmillan)

*Grumpy Frog*, Ed Vere (Puffin)

*Glad Monster, Sad Monster*, Ed Emberley (Little, Brown)  
*Pom Pom Gets the Grumps*, Sophy Henn (Puffin)  
*The New Small Person*, Lauren Child (Puffin)  
*A Great Big Cuddle*, Michael Rosen and Chris Riddell (Walker)

### Other books by Atinuke:

*Splash*, Anna Hibiscus, illustrated by Lauren Tobia (Walker) **CLPE Teaching sequence available**  
*Double Trouble for Anna Hibiscus*, illustrated by Lauren Tobia (Walker)  
*Baby Goes to Market*, illustrated by Angela Brooksbank (Walker)  
*B is for Baby*, illustrated by Angela Brooksbank (Walker)  
*Africa, Amazing Africa: Country by Country* by Atinuke, illustrated by Mouni Feddag (Walker)  
*Hugo*, illustrated by Birgitta Sif (Walker)

## Teaching Sessions

### Before beginning this book:

- Ask children to bring in photographs of themselves, their families and where they live and special family moments e.g. birthdays, holidays, celebrations. These can be talked about and stories shared. If children have not brought pictures in, take pictures of special times in the setting including the child or take a photo of them with their parent/carer as they arrive or leave the setting.

### Introducing the book: Explore an Illustration

- Without sharing the front cover of the book, introduce Anna Hibiscus through the illustration on the second page of text.
- Cover the text so that children respond only to the picture. Allow children time to look and respond to what they can see and what they think they know about Anna and her life. Where does she live? Who with? What do they do together?
- Scribe ideas in the shared journal around a copy of the picture. Read aloud the first two pages of the text.
- What is it like in Africa where Anna lives? You could watch a video for further inspiration, such as: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=826tpNNrCF0> or look at the book *Africa, Amazing Africa: Country by Country* by Atinuke, illustrated by Mouni Feddag (Walker)
- Use this as an opportunity to discuss the different countries that make up Africa, explore the continent on a globe or map and look at where the video travels to. Discuss the similarities and differences between these countries and cities and their own and cities near them or that they know.
- Allow time and space for the children to talk about their own experiences in relation to this picture. Where do they live? Who do they live with? Who is special to them that visits their home or that they spend time with? What do they do together?

- In the extended provision, the children could share their own home experiences in drawings or paintings of their own home life, if they wish to.
- Use this information to help you build your picture of the children. You could record their talk alongside their drawings.

### Exploring Feelings:

- Read aloud the next two pages of the book. Talk about what makes Grandfather and Grandmother happy.
- Ask the children to think about things, people or places that make them happy. Grandfather counts up five fingers – five things that make him happy. Share ideas together through talk.
- In the extended provision, provide card, pencils and scissors and encourage the children to draw around their hands and think of five things that make them happy in each finger and thumb.
- The children could draw, write or have scribed the things that make them happy. Share these things together.
- For further inspiration, Lauren Tobia has also illustrated the book *Happy in Our Skin*, by Fran Manushkin, which further explores things that make us happy. Read this text aloud to the group and discuss the different things that make the people in this book happy.
- Provide opportunities to discuss and explore a wider range of emotions, talking with children about other emotions they have experienced and helping them to name and recognise a broader range. The book *A Book of Feelings* by Amanda McCardie, illustrated by Salvatore Rubbino, would be a helpful text to read aloud to provoke further discussion and thinking.

### Exploring vocabulary and concepts

- Read aloud the next two pages of the text, where Anna helps her Aunties to make pounded yam. Why do you think this activity makes the aunties feel happy? What do you think they enjoy about this experience?
- How do you think Anna feels about this experience? How can you tell? Encourage the children to look for clues to this in the illustration, focussing on Anna's facial expression and body language. Which part of the scene is she feeling happy in?
- Why do you think Anna is not feeling so happy about doing this? Do the same experiences make us all happy? Talk about things that you like doing and that make you happy that maybe other people feel differently about and encourage children to do the same. Talk about how it is sometimes nice to share experiences that make us happy, but that we should be mindful that others might feel differently about the things we like.
- Investigate what a yam is by looking at one in class. What does it look/feel/smell like?
- The children could go on to draw and describe the yams.
- Read the attached recipe for pounded yams and have a go at making these in class. The children will soon experience what hard work this is for the Aunties and for little Anna.
- After the yam is cooked the children can taste the yam and describe what it is like.

- You can also take photos of the process and write it up in the children's own words to make a class recipe for pounded yam that you could share with parents and carers.

### Reenacting events:

- Read the next two pages, where Anna explores movements with her cousins. Look carefully at the illustrations before reading the text. How do the cousins feel about each other? How can you tell?
- Talk about the ways in which the cousins move and what they can do. Look at the words *somersault* and *cartwheel*. Have the children heard of these before? Do they know what these words mean? Are they able to, or do they know anyone who is able to do a somersault or a cartwheel or who is able to walk on their hands? You could watch a professional gymnast perform these moves. Talk about the care and safety involved in such movements and the practice needed to perfect them. Look again at the illustration on this page. Why do you think the children might be doing these activities in the shade?
- Look at how hard Anna tries and practices these movements, and how her cousins support her. Talk about how difficult these movements are, and the amount of work and practice that goes into getting more confident at these.
- In the outdoor area and/or in the hall, investigate physical abilities. Ensure the children know what is safe for them to do, and do not take any undue risk in performing movements beyond their own abilities. Take photos of the children engaged in physical activities and take photos to celebrate achievements. Talk about the changes that happen in our bodies when we exercise. Some may feel their heart rate increase, they may feel hot, or breathless. Relate this back to the need to cool down and stay hydrated, talking again about why the cousins might have been in the shade.
- Talk to the children about movements they can do and physical achievements they are proud of, e.g. skipping with a rope, hula hooping, riding a bike. Encourage them to share how these activities made them feel.
- Use the talk and photos to write captions with the children for a 'Look What We Can Do!' book or display to inspire others to try new physical challenges.

### Reading aloud and exploring rhythm:

- Read aloud the next two pages of the text, where Anna dances with Uncle Tunde. Why do you think Uncle Tunde bends down to Anna in the illustration at the top of the page? What does the can behind him make us think he has been doing? Children may have lots of insight and information around car care. You may wish to provide other opportunities to explore this in the extended provision.
- Explore the illustrations, talking about what the children can see and how the characters move. Look at how Anna and Uncle Tunde move together to the music. What does this tell us about their relationship?
- Listen to some traditional African music. CDs such as ‘The Rough Guide to African Music’ are fantastic for this.
- Get the children to move rhythmically and dance to the music.
- Talk about how the music sounds, what it makes them feel like and how it makes them move.
- Talk about the music the children like to dance to or music that makes them happy when they listen to it. Encourage them to vocalise what it is that they like about the music, how it makes them feel or the movements they want to make.
- Create a stage area in the indoor or outdoor area where the children can dance freely.
- You might also explore the patterns in the clothing worn by Uncle Tunde, Anna and the rest of the family and provide some African fabrics or clothing to dress up in or explore as a further stimulus for creative work around pattern making or fabric printing.

### Empathising with a character

- Read the next three pages of text, where Anna talks to her mother and father about what makes them happy. What do you think her father has just been doing? What makes you think this? How do you think he feels about seeing Anna now? How can you tell?
- Think about her father’s action when he is happy *When I am happy, I go to Mama and tell her how much I love her*, Anna running to tell her mother *“Mama, I love you so much!”* and Anna’s mother telling her *“I love you so much too, Anna Hibiscus.”* as well as taking time to explore the illustrations of them together. What does these things tell us about how their relationship as a family? Why is it important to tell the special people in your life that you love them? How does it make you feel to know you are loved? How does it make them feel to know they are loved?
- Think about how Anna describes her happiness to her Papa: *I am SO happy, soon I will pop like a balloon* and the way she tells her mother that she *is so happy, I think I am going to EXPLODE!* What do you think she means by this? You could ask children to think about what they would compare being so happy to, recording their suggestions as they offer these. You could also use this as an opportunity to talk about what happens if we get overexcited, and how happiness can turn to unexpected tears as our emotions overrun. Ask the children if this has ever happened to any of them and take time to talk about shared experiences.

- Now, take some time to share and think about the photographs that the children have bought in of their families. Who is special to them? Why? Who do they love? Who do they want to tell this to?
- In the creative area, set up a card making workshop for children to use to make cards for the people that they love and that are special to them. What will they say inside the card? Support those who need to, to scribe ideas and deliver their cards to the right people.

### Shared Writing: Rhyme and Song

- Before you complete the rest of the story, skip forward and Read Anna Hibiscus' happiness song at the end of the book. Talk about all the things that make Anna happy and use the song to recall all the events that happened in the book. Talk about the order these happened in and how these have been summarised, for example the aunties pounding the yams has been summarised to *Aunties work*.
- Learn the words and perform these as a song together – the words work well to the tune of 'Skip to my Lou' or 'Cows in the Kitchen'. You could print out and laminate pictures of the different family members to support the children in remembering the order of the words.
- Get the children to think about the things that make them the happiest. Make each idea into a line for each child, modelling first with your own idea, e.g. Jane likes to have a cup of tea.
- Use these ideas to make different verses for a class happiness song, e.g.:

*Jayden plays on the tricycle,  
Amy paints a lovely flower  
Katya and Alekss cuddle a bear,  
These things make us happy.*

*Sam and Joe like to play with cars,  
Shanice likes to skip with a skipping rope  
Campbell likes to run and jump  
These things make us happy*

- Help the children mould their lines into a rhythm that fits the song and learn parts together to perform to parents and carers at collection or drop off.

### Visualising and Describing:

- Re-read the story so far and on to the next two pages, exploring what Anna hears when she sits still in the mango tree. Why do you think her mother told her to sit still and quietly when she felt like she was going to *EXPLODE*?
- Talk with the children about different ways that they could calm down if they are feeling heightened, angry or overwhelmed. Where could they go, and what could they do?
- Take the children on a listening walk in the outdoor area. Encourage them to sit still and quietly and listen to see what they can hear.
- Encourage the children to reflect on how it feels to just sit and be quiet, and to articulate their feelings and experiences with the wider group. Was this a nice experience for them? Or did it feel uncomfortable to be so still and quiet? Children will react to different experiences in different ways and it is important to share and talk about different children's responses so that they know each is valid.
- The additional texts '*Listen, Listen*' by Phillis Gershator and Alison Jay and '*Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What do You Hear?*' By Eric Carle may provide extra stimulus for this activity, focussing children in on the need to concentrate to listen and to provide vocabulary that enables them to talk about and describe the sounds they hear.
- You could go on to make your own 'Listen, Listen' or 'Children, Children, What do You Hear?' book to record what they have heard on their listening walk, using descriptive vocabulary to describe what the things they heard sounded like, e.g.:

*Listen, Jenikah, what's that sound?*

*Birds tweeting all around.*

Or:

*Jenikah, Jenikah, what do you hear?*

*I hear a car beep, beeping in my ear!*

- The children could draw, paint or create their own illustrations for the text.

### Book Talk

- Re-read the book in its entirety, without stopping, so the children can hear the full text.
- Talk with children about their initial responses to this story, using 'Book Talk'. What did you like about it? What didn't you like? Did anything puzzle you? What connections did you make with the text?
- Scribe their comments as shared writing into a 'Book Talk' chart in class journal, discussing potential answers to any of the questions children came up with, modelling how to go back to different parts of the text and illustrations to consider their thoughts and look for answers.
- Talk in more depth about children's personal connections, for example if they talk more about themselves or their families, a time they've been happy or felt a certain way, about or about other times in their life or books they might have read that this book reminds them of.

- Ask them to say which part of the book stays in their minds most vividly. What will they tell their families about this book?
- Talk to the children about how Anna feels at the end of the story? What helped her feel this way? Talk with the children about who they might feel most comfortable in sharing any feelings with, and make a note of this to ensure that everyone in the setting knows who each child thinks their trusted adults or friends are if they ever have a moment when this information might be useful.
- Display the book prominently in the book corner where children can revisit and re-read again themselves, alongside other books by Atinuke or that centre around recognising and sharing emotions from the linked texts list.

### Towards own writing:

- Using the photos that the children have brought in, or using their own illustration, encourage the children to communicate and write about their own experiences
- They could make their own simple books about their families or their feelings or contribute to a class book about families or feelings.
- These can then be displayed in the book area for children and parents to share.

### Other ideas and Activities:

#### Phonological Awareness:

##### 1) Alliteration:

- Re read the first page of the story to the children. Enlarge the page so that the children can see the print. 'Anna Hibiscus lives in Africa, Amazing Africa. Look at all the words that start with the sound /a/.
- Use this to make a class sound book, make collections of words and pictures that start with the sounds children are learning in Phase 2 of Letters and Sounds. Photos could be taken of the children with different objects that start with each sound to make a class sound book or sound frieze for them to refer to in phonic sessions or in their own writing.

##### 2) Use and Application of Phonics using words and illustrations from the text:

**Basic code:** song, sun, hot, cool, it, is, in, up, can, mum, dad, hen, down, yam, let, see, runs, car, pop, balloon, tell, much, big, sit, back, into,

**Introducing consonant clusters:** tree, hand, three, feels, floats, jumps, help, still,

High Frequency words: lives, the, are, her, so, when, come, you, play, call, I, my, going, don't, know, around, go, love,

**Introducing the complex code:** You could explore the use of y to represent the sound /ee/ at the end of words, like happy and family and relate this to other words like mummy, daddy, nanny, granny, baby, or names like Lily, Milly, Rory, Stanley, Jimmy, Ebony, Melody

##### 3) Rhythm and Rhyme:

- Encourage families to come into the setting to record important family songs. These can be made into a playlist or CD for the children to listen to or take home.

**4) Instrumental sounds:**

- Encourage children to use music to share their happiness in the setting, dancing to favourite songs or making their own music with classroom instruments.

**5) Environmental sounds:**

- Encourage the children to keep listening for sounds as they sit still and quietly in the setting. See if they can ascribe meanings to the sounds, recognising where they may be coming from, and describing the sounds using appropriate vocabulary related to dynamics, duration, pitch etc.

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